



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave National
Monument

11149 U.S Highway 16
Bldg B12
Custer, SD 57730

605-673-2288 phone
605-673-3294 fax
www.nps.gov/jeca

Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

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Dena Matteson 605-673-2288

Improvements to Cave Lighting System Will Result in Temporary Cancellation Of Programs at Jewel Cave National Monument

JEWEL CAVE NATIONAL MONUMENT, S.D. - The National Park Service will be making improvements to the cave lighting system at Jewel Cave National Monument in December. In order to allow work to be completed in an efficient and timely manner, all cave programs will be cancelled on December 13 and 14, and from December 17 through 21.

Upgrades to the cave lighting system are necessary in order to meet current standards and provide for more efficient maintenance of the system. Work will involve the replacement of electrical components that were installed in the cave during the initial construction of the Scenic Tour route in the 1960s. The lighting system was installed to provide viewing opportunities for the visiting public. Many of the original components have become obsolete and difficult to maintain. Replacement of these components will improve the reliability of the cave lighting system.

Improvements to the cave lighting system will allow the National Park Service to continue to provide enjoyable visitor experiences. This project has been made possible through the fees paid by visitors taking cave tours. Jewel Cave National Monument is able to retain visitor fees for accomplishing special park projects.

The normal winter tour schedule includes Scenic Tours and Discovery Talks. Scenic Tours are available at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The Scenic Tour provides an opportunity to view the variety of beautiful, colorful and rare cave formations for which Jewel Cave is famous. This ½ mile tour is moderately strenuous, following a paved, lighted trail with over 700 stair steps, and lasting approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. Discovery Talks are available at 9:05 a.m., 12:45 p.m., and 3:45 p.m. The Discovery Talk is a 20-minute introduction to the cultural and natural history of Jewel Cave that is conducted in one large room of the cave. The Discovery Talk is available for people with limited mobility. Both tours enter and leave the cave by elevator from the Visitor Center. The cave temperature is 49°F. A light coat or sweater and sturdy walking shoes are recommended.

For more information, please contact Jewel Cave National Monument at 605-673-2288 or visit www.nps.gov/jeca.

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